



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

January 21, 2016

TO: Stephanie Pincetl, Chair  
Doug Smith, Vice Chair  
David W. Louie, Commissioner  
Curt Pedersen, Commissioner  
Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: Carmen Sainz, Supervising Regional Planner  
Community Studies East Section

**FEBRUARY 3, 2016 MEETING – AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 - LA CRESCENTA-MONTROSE COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT UPDATE DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION - PLAN NO. RPPL 2016000546-(5)**

At your meeting on February 3, 2016, the Community Studies East Section staff will provide your Commission with an overview of the La Crescenta-Montrose Community Standards District (CSD) update project, and will recommend that your Commission take action to initiate the preparation of ordinance amendments to allow for a CSD update to address development standards for the Foothill Boulevard corridor within the La Crescenta-Montrose unincorporated community.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ord. 2009-0032 which created the La Crescenta-Montrose CSD (§22.44.139). This CSD established development standards for the Foothill Boulevard corridor. It addressed building and structure design, architectural style, landscaping, yard setbacks, signs, and permitted uses. The intent was to improve the appearance of the corridor through quality design and landscaping. Unfortunately, implementation of the CSD has proven difficult to implement because some of the language is vague, subject to different interpretations, and problematical to enforce. Terms and phrases such as “style,” “earth toned color,” and “consistent with the chosen architectural style” make it difficult for a citizen to comprehend what is allowed and not allowed because the language does not provide for clear, prescriptive standards. Finally, because approvals are issued through an administrative site plan review, it leaves virtually all discretion of approval in the hands of County staff.

### **CSD UPDATE PROCESS/BENEFITS**

Staff has been working closely with the CSD Subcommittee of the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee to address the issues presented above. The direction from the Town Council to the CSD Subcommittee is to seek workable solutions to clarify the ordinance language, while still mandating good design and pedestrian-supportive development, as well as to remove ambiguous and unenforceable

terminology. Working with staff, the subcommittee members have revised the CSD accordingly.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based upon the foregoing, staff recommends the following Commission actions:

- Instruct the Department of Regional Planning to prepare an ordinance to modify and clarify certain provisions contained in Sec. 22.44.139 of Title 22 (La Crescenta-Montrose CSD) of the County Code to address development standards for the Foothill Boulevard corridor.
- Instruct the Department of Regional Planning to coordinate with other County departments, including but not limited to, County Counsel, the Department of Public Works and the Fire Department, to update the CSD accordingly.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will prepare the amendment, including the Staff Report, maps, and draft ordinance for public hearing before your Commission.

Should you have any questions about this memo, please contact Mr. Phillip Estes of the Community Studies East Section at [pestes@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:pestes@planning.lacounty.gov) or (213) 974-6425.

### **RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

**I move that the Regional Planning Commission instruct the Department of Regional Planning to prepare an ordinance to modify and clarify certain provisions of the La Crescenta-Montrose CSD contained in Section 22.44.139 of the County Code which address development standards for the Foothill Boulevard corridor.**

**I also move that the Regional Planning Commission instruct the Department of Regional Planning to coordinate with other County departments, including but not limited to, County Counsel, the Department of Public Works and the Fire Department, to update the CSD accordingly.**

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